

REMARKS

In response to the office action Applicant has amended claim 1 and has canceled claims 8 and 9. Applicant has added new claim 10.

The Examiner objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR1.84(p)(4) because the reference character "26" has been used to designate both indent outlet and scrapper. The Examiner therefore required corrected drawing sheets to be submitted in response to this objection. In response to this rejection, Applicant advises that the indent and scrapper are one and the same. Consequently, instead of submitted corrected drawings, Applicant has amended the specification by deleting the word "scrapper" on page 6, line 22 and replacing it with the word - - indent - -. Applicant has made some additional minor amendments to page 6, line 23 and page 5, lines 19 and 20 to correct some minor typographical errors. Applicant respectfully submits that these amendments have addressed the issue raised by the Examiner and have overcome the objection to the drawings.

The Examiner objected to the disclosure because of a typographical error on page 6, line 15. In response, Applicant has requested appropriate correction of the typographical error.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thatcher et al (US 4,765,354) in view of Bannan (US 4,982,471).

In response, the Applicant notes that Bannan relates to a device for cleaning a paint brush rather than a paint roller as in the present case. As there are

significant differences between paint rollers and paint brushes, we do not believe that there is any suggestion that a person looking for a means of cleaning a paint roller would consult devices used in connection with paint brushes. On this basis, we do not think that combination of Bannan and Thatcher is appropriate. In any event, in light of the amended claims, we note that neither Thatcher nor Bannan includes the features of a pressure release means including a vent opening closed by a plug, so the plug is able to be released by pressure within the housing.

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nell (US 4,778,534) in view of Bannan and further in view of Rossborough et al (US 4,711,258).

Again, none of these citations discloses or suggests, either singly or in combination, a paint roller having a pressure release means in the form of a vent opening closed by a plug with the plug being able to be released by pressure within the housing. As none of the documents referred to, either singly or in combination, discloses or suggests such a combination, we also believe that it is appropriate to say that it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify any prior art device by the inclusion of a vent, as suggested in combination with the original features of claim 1.

The Examiner rejected claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thatcher et al in view of Bannan and further in view of Yates (US 6,550,489) and rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Thatcher et al in view of Bannan and further in view of Yates and Egan

(2002/0166866).

Both Yates and Egan relate to device incorporating a pressure release valve. In the case of Yates, the pressure release valve is operative in connection with a low pressure hot water washing apparatus. As can be clearly observed, the paint roller cleaner of the present invention is a very close fit around a paint roller. The reason for this is that in the washing of a paint roller it is important to use minimum water to ensure that a minimum of waste water is created. Furthermore, in typical washing operations, hot water would not generally be sought. The device of Yates suggests a vent 32, which allows the escape of heated water vapor and steam. The use of the vent in this situation is consistent with the need to allow hot gases generated by using hot water to be vented. There is no teaching or suggestion contained in any of these documents that would suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art that the use of water at ambient temperature would require a pressure release vent.

Similar comments apply in relation to Egan. In this case, a device including a valve for venting low gas pressure is disclosed. Low gas pressure is developed, in this case, through the release of gas from fermenting wine. During the operation of a paint roller cleaner it is apparent that no gas is generated, and that no expansion due to temperature rises is incorporated. Again, we suggest that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not seek to vent gases generated from a paint roller cleaner and that the combination of Egan with the remaining documents, i.e., Thatcher, Bannan and Rossborough, is inappropriate.

In light of the above comments with respect to all of the cited art, Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 is not obvious and is therefore

allowable. Applicant further submits that claims 2-7 are also allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

Applicant has also added new claim 10 that is dependent from amended claim 1 and includes the feature of the housing having an oversized end projection that fits over the vent opening thereby securing the plug thereto. As this claim is dependent from claim 1, Applicant submits that it is also allowable as being dependent from an allowable base claim.

The claims remaining for consideration in this application are claims 1-7 and 10. Applicant submits that all of these claims are in condition for allowance and early issuance of a Notice of Allowability to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the issues raised in this response, he is invited to contact the undersigned at (330) 244-1174.

Respectfully submitted at Canton, Ohio this 30TH day of MAY, 2008.

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